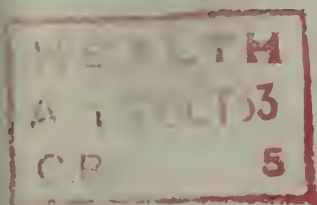


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RURAL DISTRICT OF BATTLE



Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health
for the year 1952

BY

M. I. SILVERTON, T.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.O.P., D.P.H.



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THE RURAL DISTRICT OF BATTLE

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(constitution at 31st December, 1952)

Chairman:

COUNCILLOR HON. E. D. COURTHOPE

Vice-Chairman:

COUNCILLOR A. C. McCRAE

COUN. G. BARLING

COUN. E. BLUFF

COUN. COMDR. C. V. JACK

COUN. BRIG. A. B. MACDONALD

COUN. G. MIGHALL

COUN. SIR ALAN MOORE, BART.,
M.B., D.P.H.

COUN. H. G. SEYMOUR

COUN. F. SUREN, J.P.

COUN. MRS. M. WEST

COUN. COL. H. J. WILSON,
O.B.E., T.D.

COUN. MRS. E. WOODGATE

STAFF OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Medical Officer of Health:

M. I. Silverton, T.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Senior Sanitary Inspector:

W. Francis, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Sanitary Inspectors:

W. T. Dunford, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A., M.R.San.I.

K. G. Bewick, Cert.S.I.B., M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

R. E. Briggs, D.P.A., Cert.S.I.B., A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

G. J. Allen, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Clerical Staff:

Chief Clerk : Miss M. E. Portnell

Diphtheria Immunisation and Vaccination Clerk :

Miss M. H. Hearnshaw*

Shorthand-Typists and General Clerks:

Miss E. G. Dorey

Miss W. R. Burt

Miss M. C. Laird

Mr. I. W. Mason

Rat Catchers : Mr. A. J. French

Mr. R. Elliott

*County Staff employed locally.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND COUNCILLORS OF BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1952, this being the nineteenth since the formation of this District.

The statistics on page 5 reveal that the health of the District compares favourably with the rest of England and Wales.

The provision of new Council houses has helped to alleviate the shortage in some measure but waiting lists are still over long. I am grateful to the Housing Committee and Housing Manager for their ready co-operation with regard to the rehousing of those families in urgent need.

Water and sewerage schemes have been pushed ahead despite financial stringency, both centrally and locally.

The Sanitary Inspectors under the able leadership of Mr. Francis (Chief Sanitary Inspector) have been most assiduous in promoting the health of this community. The Chief Clerk (Miss Portnell) and the Office Staff have contributed greatly to the success of our endeavours by their efficiency and loyalty. The painstaking efforts of the Immunisation Clerk (Miss Hearnshaw) have been most helpful in combatting diphtheria, there having been no cases during the past five years.

I am obliged to the Clerk of the Council and other Chief Officers for their co-operation at all times.

I am grateful to the Councillors and, in particular, the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee for their stimulating interest and support.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

M. I. SILVERTON,

Medical Officer of Health.

The Watch Oak,
Battle, Sussex.

STATISTICS RELATING TO BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT

	1950	1951	1952
Area of District in acres (estimated)	117,147	117,147	117,147
Population (Registrar-General's estimate for mid-year)	29,910	29,960	29,770
Rateable value	£210,309	£215,904	£219,960
Sum represented by a penny rate ..	£852	£872	£875
Number of rateable premises at 1st April	11,193	11,427	11,484

BIRTHS AND BIRTH RATES

LIVE BIRTHS:	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	178	174	352
Illegitimate	8	10	18
	186	184	370
STILLBIRTHS:			
Legitimate	6	4	10
Illegitimate	1	—	1
	7	4	11

Live birth rate per 1,000 of home population	12.42
Corrected birth rate	14.28
Live birth rate per 1,000 of home population (England and Wales)	15.3
Still birth rate per 1,000 births (live and still)	28.87
Still birth rate per 1,000 births (live and still) (England and Wales)	22.6

The Corrected Birth Rate takes into account the abnormal constitution of the population of this District in which there is a predominance of higher age groups and is therefore the appropriate figure when comparison is made with the rest of England and Wales.

Similarly, the Corrected Death Rate is the comparative figure for the rest of England and Wales.

DEATHS AND DEATH RATES

DEATHS:					<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
1949	..	..	..	..	220	214	434
1950	..	..	..	..	213	215	428
1951	..	..	..	..	220	215	435
1952	..	..	..	..	184	210	394
Death rate for Battle Rural District per 1,000 of resident population							
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13.23
Corrected death rate for Battle Rural District							
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9.52
Death rate for England and Wales per 1,000 of civilian population							
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11.3

DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR:				Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	..	..	..	6	2	8
Illegitimate	..	..	..	—	1	1
				6	3	9

Infant death rate per 1,000 live births:

Battle Rural District..	..	..	..	..	..	24.32
England and Wales ..	..	..	..	..	..	27.6

Death rate for diarrhoea (infants under 2 years) per 1,000 live births:

Battle Rural District	..	..	..	..	..	nil
England and Wales ..	..	..	..	..	..	1.1

Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live and still births:

Battle Rural District..	..	..	..	..	..	nil
England and Wales ..	..	..	..	..	..	0.72

DEATH RATES FROM SPECIFIC CAUSES

	England and Wales	Battle R.D.
Typhoid and paratyphoid	0.00	—
Whooping cough	0.00	—
Diphtheria	0.00	—
Tuberculosis	0.24	0.16
Acute poliomyelitis & polioencephalitis	0.01	0.00
Influenza	0.04	0.00
Pneumonia	0.47	0.53

DETAILED CAUSES OF DEATH

	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	2	2	4
Tuberculosis, other	0	1	1
Syphilitic disease	0	1	1
Acute poliomyelitis	0	1	1
Malignant neoplasms	26	33	59
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	1	0	1
Diabetes	0	1	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system	17	28	45
Coronary disease, angina	25	16	41
Hypertension with heart disease	5	7	12
Other heart diseases	43	64	107
Other circulatory diseases	7	5	12
Influenza	0	1	1
Pneumonia	11	5	16
Bronchitis	4	5	9
Other diseases of respiratory system	3	2	5
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	4	1	5
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	0	2	2
Nephritis and nephrosis	3	2	5
Hyperplasia of prostate	8	0	8
Congenital malformations	3	3	6
Other defined or ill-defined diseases	12	24	36
Motor vehicle accidents	2	0	2
All other accidents	4	4	8
Suicide	4	2	6
	184	210	394

The chief causes of death in order of frequency were:

- (i) Diseases of the heart and circulatory system . . 172 (43.9%)
- (ii) Malignant neoplasms (cancer) 59 (14.9%)
- (iii) Vascular lesions of nervous system 45 (11.4%)
- (iv) Respiratory diseases (excluding tuberculosis) 30 (7.8%)

It will be observed that there were 394 deaths from all causes and of these 278 (70.5%) occurred in persons of 65 years of age or over.

70.5% deaths over 65 in Battle R.D. for 1952 compares with 66.5% deaths over 65 in England and Wales for 1951. (1952 figures for England and Wales are not yet available.)

TUBERCULOSIS NOTIFICATIONS

	1947		1948		1949		1950		1951		1952	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pulmonary: Additions to Register . .	9	11	13	12	12	12	18	16	18	9	15	15
Total on Register at 31st Dec. . .	64	82	54	71	44	46	52	55	60	60	64	67
Non-pulmonary: Additions to Register . .	4	3	3	6	3	3	1	5	2	4	6	4
Total on Register at 31st Dec. . .	41	34	25	28	18	15	15	17	13	18	16	19

TRANSFERS FROM OTHER DISTRICTS

				PULMONARY		NON-PULMONARY	
				Male	Female	Male	Female
1st Quarter	..	..	..	2	2	1	—
2nd „	..	..	..	1	—	—	1
3rd „	..	..	..	1	4	1	—
4th „	..	..	..	1	2	—	—
Totals	..	..	..	5	8	2	1

It will be noted that the transfers from other districts account for a large part of the apparent increase.

Notified After Death: Nil

Tabulated lists (in age groups) of New Cases notified in this District and all Deaths during the current year are appended :

Age	NEW CASES (PRIMARY NOTIFICATIONS)				ALL DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3—5	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
6—10	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
11—15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16—25	1	2	1	1	—	1	—	—
26—35	1	1	1	—	1	—	—	—
36—45	1	2	1	—	1	—	—	—
46—60	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Over 60	2	—	—	1	—	1	—	1
Total	10	7	5	3	2	2	—	1

MASS MINIATURE RADIOGRAPHY

Dr. B. G. Rigden, the Director of the East Sussex Mass Radiography Unit visited Battle from September 10 to September 16, 1952.

Herewith analysis of results:

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number of persons X-rayed	183	280	463
Number recalled for large films ..	15	11	26
Number found to have abnormal large films	13	8	21
Analysis of abnormal large films:			
(a) Active pulmonary tuberculosis ..	Nil	1	1
(b) Inactive pulmonary tuberculosis..	6	3	9
(c) Malignant disease	Nil	Nil	Nil
(d) Other diseases of lung or pleura ..	3	3	6
(e) Cardio-vascular diseases	2	Nil	2
Number (per 1,000 persons X-rayed) with active pulmonary tuberculosis: 2.15%.			

NOTE: No persons under 15 years are X-rayed, except school-leavers.

The results obtained are strictly confidential and only communicated to the private doctors of persons found to have abnormalities.

The surrounding district was publicised and the newspapers were helpful in giving advance publicity for this scheme.

It is hoped that further visits will be made and that more people will take advantage of this worthwhile service; it would be ideal if this survey could become an annual event.

Early diagnosis ensures a more complete recovery in less time and cuts down the incidence of tuberculosis by the treatment of infected persons who would otherwise be spreading the disease in their families and at work unknown to themselves.

INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS FOR THE YEARS 1947-52, 1st JANUARY
—31st DECEMBER RESPECTIVELY

	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Diphtheria (a)	1	0	0	0	0	0
Acute poliomyelitis (b)	4	0	1	3	0	8
Meningococcal infection	0	1	0	3	1	2
Measles (c)	150	221	422	69	410	190
Scarlet fever (d)	12	13	32	35	22	87
Whooping cough	140	108	42	162	251	72
Acute pneumonia	4	8	23	23	25	34
Erysipelas	3	6	6	8	2	7
Puerperal pyrexia	2	2	1	0	1	3
Dysentery (e)	0	0	0	0	1	1
Enteric group	0	0	0	1	5	0

(a) Diphtheria

For the past five years Battle Rural District has been free from diphtheria.

There is no doubt that immunisation is responsible for this satisfactory result. The campaign for the prevention of this killing disease is pursued with the utmost vigour in order to obviate the possibility of recurrence.

Relevant immunisation statistics are given on page 13.

(b) Acute Poliomyelitis

There were eight cases in this District in 1952 in contrast to a nil return in 1951.

Two cases, one non-paralytic child and one paralytic adult, occurred in July and August respectively in different parishes and were not connected.

The remaining six cases were extensions of the epidemic which flared up in the Borough of Rye during November and early December and occurred in Parishes adjacent to this town. One adult died before the ambulance arrived to take her to hospital. The remainder, all school

children, are in process of making good recoveries having returned to school, with the exception of one boy who is still having orthopaedic treatment in hospital.

Poliomyelitis is apparently of low infectivity, other cases in the same household being unusual. It will be observed that the number of confirmed cases was quite out of proportion to the alarm and panic which ensued at that time.

In this connection it may be noted that in 1951 there were 2,614 cases and 217 deaths from poliomyelitis in England and Wales, whereas there were 4,964 deaths from accidents in private houses and 4,698 deaths from road accidents during the corresponding period, a situation which is accepted by the public generally without demur.

Most patients recover completely from poliomyelitis, others have mild residual disabilities which do not incapacitate them, a small minority are unfortunately grossly disabled.

Research is being vigorously pursued in order to perfect a protective vaccine and there are high hopes that this will eventually be possible.

(c) Measles

As forecast in my last report there has been a substantial decrease for the year under review. There were no admissions to hospital and no deaths.

(d) Scarlet Fever

Although the numbers notified show a substantial increase the disease itself has been mild with no serious complications or deaths. The majority were nursed in their own homes, of which course I approve, except where other members of the family are milkers or food handlers and effective isolation of the case is not possible.

(e) Dysentery

Food Poisoning Outbreaks in 1952.

Total number of outbreaks..	..	..	One
Number of cases	..	..	One
Number of deaths	..	..	Nil
Type of organism	..	..	Shigella sonnei

One person employed as a hotel kitchen trainee in another district returned to her parent's home following a bout of illness during the previous fortnight. Specimens of faeces were submitted for bacteriological investigation by the General Practitioner concerned, when she was found to be excreting *Shigella sonnei*. The Medical Officer of the district concerned was immediately notified of all circumstances.

All other members of her family submitted samples but with negative results.

Eventually three samples were submitted from the patient concerned, with negative results, and it was considered that she was fit to

return to work and the Medical Officer of Health of the District was informed accordingly.

It was considered that she was infected before arrival in this District.

Other Diseases

The incidence of the other infectious diseases have no particular significance.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN AGE GROUPS

	Measles	Whooping cough	Scarlet fever	Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Acute Poliomyelitis	Meningococcal infection	Puerperal Pyrexia	Dysentery	Totals
Under 1 year	2	4	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	8
1—2 years	20	16	7	3	—	—	—	—	—	46
3—4 "	31	13	15	5	—	1	—	—	—	65
5—9 "	111	36	56	4	—	2	—	—	—	209
10—14 "	12	3	7	1	1	3	—	—	—	27
15—24 "	4	—	1	—	—	1	2	2	1	11
25—44 "	5	—	—	5	—	1	—	1	—	12
45—64 "	4	—	—	7	5	—	—	—	—	16
65 and over	1	—	—	8	1	—	—	—	—	10
Totals	190	72	87	34	7	8	2	3	1	404

DISTRIBUTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE VARIOUS PARISHES

	Measles	Whoop- ing Cough	Scarlet Fever	Pneu- monia	Erysi- pelas	Acute Polio- myelitis	Mening- ococcal Infect.	Puerperal pyrexia	Dysentry	Estimat- ed Pop- ulation
Ashburnham ..	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	380
Battle	49	7	8	—	1	—	—	—	—	4,371
Beckley	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	962
Bodiam	—	1	3	—	—	—	2	—	—	377
Brede	3	—	15	2	—	—	—	—	—	1,211
Brightling ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	408
Broomhill ..	10	2	2	1	1	1	—	—	—	270
Burwash	19	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,227
Catsfield	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	730
Crowhurst ..	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	627
Dallington ..	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	348
East Guldeford ..	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	109
Etchingham ..	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	585
Ewhurst	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	822
Fairlight	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	932
Guestling	6	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	970
Hurst Green ..	2	34	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	760
Icklesham	9	1	5	7	1	2	—	1	—	1,794
Iden	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	431
Mountfield ..	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	622
Northiam	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,500
Ore	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	328
Peasmarsh	—	17	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	733
Penhurst	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	56
Pett	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	557
Playden	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	291
Rye Foreign ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	273
Salehurst	6	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,509
Sedlescombe ..	13	—	13	4	1	—	—	—	—	765
St. Thomas the Apostle, Winchelsea ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	178
Ticehurst	45	—	2	10	1	—	—	2	—	2,385
Udimore	2	—	1	2	—	3	—	—	—	354
Westfield	13	—	24	2	—	—	—	—	—	1,494
Whatlington ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	266
Totals	190	72	87	34	7	8	2	3	1	

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

A comparison of the percentages immunised in the 1—5 years and 5—14 years age groups once more exemplifies the apathy of the young mothers concerned in not taking advantage of this life-saving measure.

The difference is explained by the fact that in pre-school age children the mother must make the effort to take the child to the Clinic, whereas during school age the Clinic is held at the school and the mother need not attend. Admittedly some mothers find it difficult to make this extra effort but in fairness to their children they cannot afford to neglect this opportunity of securing early protection.

Almost 35% of children up to 5 years are unprotected and this is a potential danger which may flare up at any time. They are benefiting from the action of those mothers who have taken the initiative and have so limited the spread of infection. This reliance upon others is a risky procedure not commensurate with the ease of receiving the requisite protection of two painless injections under the skin with at least a month's interval between each injection.

In 1939, prior to the advent of this service, 837 children in England and Wales under 5 years died from diphtheria. In 1951, following the immunisation of the major portion of the child population, the number became six. Comparative figures of this type should convey the value of this measure to the most unimaginative parent.

Number of children who received injections in 1952:

	<i>Under</i>								
	1	1	2	3	4	5—9	10—14	<i>Total</i>	
<i>Primary Course:</i>									
Treated at clinics ..	39	63	11	4	6	46	11	180	
By private doctors ..	104	57	4	1	2	4	1	173	
<i>Reinforcing injections:</i>									
Treated at clinics ..	—	—	—	—	60	396	83	539	
By private doctors ..	—	—	—	—	13	55	26	94	
Totals—Under 5 ..	..	..	291					
5—14 (inc.) ..	..	..	62					
Reinforcing ..	..	..	633					

Total number of children under 15 years of age, resident in the area, who had been immunised by 31st December, 1952:

Under 5 years ..	1,368
5—14 (inc.) ..	4,143
	<hr/>
	5,511
	<hr/>

Comparative figures for the past three years:

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>
Number immunised under 5 years ..	1,503	1,506	1,368
Child population (under 5 years) ..	2,315	2,289	2,081
Percentage of child population (under 5)	65.14%	65.79%	65.73%
Number immunised 5—14 (inc.) ..	3,503	3,915	4,143
Child population (5—14 (inc.)) ..	4,184	4,202	4,326
Percentage of child population (5—14)	83.72%	93.16%	95.76%

(The Registrar General is unable to supply population figures for 1952. The figures given are therefore estimated.)

Diphtheria Immunisation percentages for Schools.

School	No. on Register	No. Immunised	Percentage
Ashburnham C.P.	66	65	98.48
Battle V.P.	361	340	94.18
Beckley V.P.	54	50	92.59
Bodiam V.P.	58	54	93.10
Brede C.P.	72	63	87.50
Burwash V.P.	129	120	93.02
St. Philip's, Burwash Weald	54	50	92.59
Catsfield V.P.	65	58	89.23
Crowhurst V.P.	55	53	96.36
Dallington V.P.	42	39	92.85
Etchingham V.P.	29	29	100.00
Ewhurst V.P.	19	19	100.00
Fairlight V.P.	37	35	94.59
Guestling V.P.	48	47	97.91
Hurst Green V.P.	92	82	89.13
Icklesham V.P.	52	47	90.38
Mountfield and Whatlington V.P.	146	135	92.46
Netherfield V.P.	58	54	93.10
Northiam V.P.	113	110	97.34
Peasmarsh V.P.	71	68	95.77
Pett V.P.	43	36	83.72
Playden V.P.	46	42	91.30
Salehurst V.P.	175	166	94.85
Sedlescombe V.P.	95	92	96.84
Staplecross V.P.	49	46	93.87
Stonegate V.P.	49	49	100.00
Ticehurst V.P.	185	180	97.29
Udimore C.P.	46	46	100.00
Westfield C.P.	145	137	94.48
Winchelsea V.P.	68	64	94.11
	2,522	2,376	94.21
Attending private schools or schools outside the District	1,804	1,767	97.94

Comparative Percentages for the past three years

	1950	1951	1952
Attending County Council Schools	92.26%	93.11%	94.21%
Attending private schools or schools outside the District	73.41%	93.23%	97.94%

VACCINATION

The following persons were vaccinated in 1952:

		<i>Under 1 year</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2—4</i>	<i>5—14</i>	<i>15 or over</i>	<i>Total</i>
Primary Vaccination	..	218	10	13	9	10	260
Revaccination	..	—	—	4	24	107	135

Comparison with previous years:

			<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>
Total primary vaccinations	..	..	331	1,111	260
Total revaccinations	..	..	161	1,855	135
Number of babies born in 1952	..	..	..	..	370
Number of babies under 1 year vaccinated in 1952	..	..	..	..	218
Percentage vaccinated in 1952	..	..	..	..	58.91%

Numbers have once more fallen, even below 1950, indicating how easily the public forgets past scares. The increased figures for 1951 indicate the proximity of the Brighton outbreak of that year.

It is hoped that parents will be more realistic and take advantage of this protective service which is offered to them individually after the birth of each child. The speed of air travel makes the likelihood of the introduction of smallpox an ever-present possibility.

CLEAN FOOD

Responsible members of the food distributing trades are becoming increasingly aware of the necessity for personal hygiene in food handling, but we still have a submerged "tenth" who do not appear to realise their obligations to their fellows and they are a persistent menace who must be kept under constant supervision.

Their dubious methods are usually well established and having been fortunate in the past in not having been detected as the known focus of infection they obstinately refuse to adopt accepted hygiene practices.

It is interesting to note that when a shop of this type changes hands the new owner is almost without exception keen and willing to improve the amenities, and the transformation both inside and outside the shop is only too obvious.

The consumers are somewhat blameworthy in that they patronise shops who patently transgress, e.g. clouds of flies, particularly in fish shops, smelly rather dark interiors in poor decorative state and overcrowded with foods of various types, some in tins and prepacked, others exposed to any form of contamination that may elect to alight upon them. Until the public becomes more selective in their shopping so will these potentially dangerous shops remain with us.

The Sanitary Inspectors are assiduous in their efforts to improve standards and are making headway, but one hopes the public will realise the need for active co-operation.

ICE CREAM

Fourteen new premises were registered for the sale of ice cream during 1952, bringing the total to 115. Fifty-three registered premises sell only the wrapped product.

The premises are kept under supervision and the owners individually advised regarding hygienic dispensing of this vulnerable product.

INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

All animals destined for sale for human consumption are sent to the central slaughterhouse in Hastings, and meat inspection is thus limited to visiting butchers' shops. These visits are often made at the request of the butcher who has found some diseased condition when cutting up the meat.

An account of food found unfit for human consumption is given below:

264 lb. meat	3 tins tomatoes
49½ lb. offal	1 tin raspberries
18 lb. bacon	2 tins oranges
25 lb. sausages	1 tin cherries
1 tin ham	12 tins plums
2 tins luncheon meat	2 tins pineapple
2 tins stewed steak	1 jar peaches
2 tins pork brawn	2 tins marmalade
1 tin kidneys	3 tins jam
99 tins fish	2 tins apple puree
3 tins beans	23 tins condensed milk
1 tin peas	

The amount of tinned food condemned is less than in the previous year, probably due to a gradual return to normal distribution and less prolonged storage, under more suitable conditions.

MILK PRODUCTION AND PRODUCERS

The following is a comparative estimate of the percentage of different types of milk produced in this District:

		1949	1950	1951	1952
T.T. milk ..	..	20%	29.3%	35.35%	41.0%
Accredited milk ..	..	10%	5.4%	8.72%	5.1%
Undesignated ..	..	70%	65.3%	55.93%	53.8%

The progressive increase in the percentage of T.T. milk is noted with satisfaction.

The policy of submitting samples of milk for biological testing in order to discover the presence of tuberculosis infection and brucellosis was continued.

There were two cases of tuberculosis in cattle, the diseased animals were slaughtered.

There were six cases of herds excreting milk containing *Brucella* organisms, the respective milks being retailed in the raw state. The owners were immediately notified and by arrangement with the Milk Marketing Board the supply was pasteurised.

In the interim, quarter samples were taken from each cow in the herd and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for analysis. On receipt of the results the offending cows were removed from the herd and an undertaking accepted from the farmer that the milk obtained from these animals would not be used for human consumption in the raw state. The farmer then reverted to his previous practice of milk disposal from the rest of the herd.

There is no regulation which puts a "stop" on these carriers being sold in the open market and being absorbed into another milking herd; it is quite likely that their new owners are unaware that they are unwittingly being the means of disseminating infection. There is no legal onus on the previous owner to notify the present owner that he has bought a cow which may give rise to undulant fever when its milk is consumed in the raw state.

MILK AND DAIRIES REGULATIONS, 1949

There are now eight retail dairies remaining in the District under the supervision of this local authority. Without exception they retail milk already bottled and emanating from large efficient pasteurising establishments in neighbouring towns. Ten samples of pasteurised milk were taken and all satisfied both the methylene blue and phosphatase tests.

The least satisfactory feature of the milk supply is the large number (45) of produce-retailers who distribute non-designated raw milk. These retailers are registered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and the inspection of their premises is therefore no longer a duty of the local authority.

Sampling in the course of distribution is now the only remaining method of checking left to this Authority.

Increasing numbers of samples are submitted for biological testing by arrangement with the Public Health Laboratory Service.

INFANT WELFARE CENTRES IN BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT

<i>Name and address of Centre</i>	<i>Sessions in month</i>
BATTLE: Church Hall	First Wednesday in month. (temporarily suspended)
BECKLEY: Parish Hall	First Tuesday in month.
BODIAM: Parish Room	Second Thursday in month.
BREDE and UDIMORE:	
The Hall, Broad Oak	Second Wednesday in month.
BURWASH: Congregational Hall ..	Second and fourth Thursdays in month.
ETCHINGHAM: Village Hall	First Thursday in month. (Weighing sessions only)
FLIMWELL: Village Hall	Fourth Tuesday in month.
HURST GREEN: Village Hall	Second Tuesday in month.
IDEN and PLAYDEN:	
Memorial Hall, Peasmarsh ..	First Friday in month.
NORTHIAM:	
Women's Institute Hall	Third Tuesday in month
ROBERTSBRIDGE:	
The Institute, Station Road ..	First and Third Tuesdays in month.
SEDLSCOMBE: Village Hall	First Thursday in month.
TICEHURST: Institute Hall	First Wednesday in month.
WESTFIELD: Church Hall	Third Tuesday in month.
WINCHELSEA: The New Hall	Second Friday in month.

WATER SUPPLY

There are five Statutory Undertakings within the District:

<i>Undertaking</i>	<i>Parishes served</i>
Battle Rural District Council	Battle, Crowhurst, Whatlington, Mountfield, Playden, Iden, Rye Foreign and part Peasmarsh.
Hastings Corporation	Parts of Westfield, Guestling, Pett, Fairlight, Icklesham including Winchelsea and Rye Harbour, and part of Ore.
Heathfield and District Water Co. ..	Burwash, Etchingham, Hurst Green, Robertsbridge, Bodiam and Ticehurst.
Cranbrook and District Water Co. ..	Northiam.
Bexhill Corporation	Ashburnham, Catsfield and part of Crowhurst.

Completion of arrangements with the Bexhill Corporation for the supply of main water to 38 properties in the parish of Ashburnham was greatly appreciated by the householders concerned.

The staff of the Water Engineer's Department were submitted for their annual blood testing in order to eliminate the possibility of a carrier state with consequent pollution of the water supply. This is

arranged with the helpful co-operation of the Pathologist of the Royal East Sussex Hospital, Hastings. The results did not indicate any past or present disease likely to affect the purity of the water supply.

Other Piped Supplies

TOOT ROCK, PETT LEVEL

This small privately-owned supply serves 54 houses in the Pett Level area only. The source is a shallow well and the water of poor quality in the raw state. It is, however, filtered and chlorinated and five samples taken for bacteriological examination showed satisfactory results.

FAIRLIGHT COVE ESTATE WATER COMPANY

This company supplies filtered and chlorinated water to 78 properties, the Warren Estate and the Pett Water Company. The company submitted eight reports during the year on samples of water examined bacteriologically, of which seven were satisfactory and one unsatisfactory. Eleven samples were taken by the Council for similar examinations and of these nine were satisfactory and two unsatisfactory. Cleansing of the main storage tank eliminated the cause of the unsatisfactory samples.

The Fairlight Cove Estate Water Company have intimated that they would not oppose proposals for incorporating their area in that of the Hastings Statutory Water Undertaking. Accordingly a Notice of Requisition was served on Hastings Corporation with their tacit approval during October 1950. The work had not commenced by the end of 1952 owing to the shortage of iron pipes.

- (a) WARREN ESTATE. Thirty-nine houses on this estate depend on the Fairlight Cove Water Company for their supply and as that company is often short of water for its own consumers this Estate is sometimes without water for days. It is likely that the Warren Estate will eventually be taken into the Hastings Corporation's statutory area.
- (b) PETT WATER COMPANY. This is a small company which merely distributes water from the Fairlight Cove Estate when available. Fifteen houses in the Chick Hill area of Pett are served and the inadequacy of the supply has led to many complaints.

Agreement has now been reached that this area will be served by the new Hastings Corporation main which should be available in 1953.

FIREHILLS ESTATE WATER COMPANY

This company restricts its filtered water supply to its own estate comprising 102 houses and operates a system of rationing during the summer months by supplying water to each of nine sectors in turn so that individual houses have their storage tanks filled once a day. Five samples taken by the Council were satisfactory.

The following table summarises the results of bacteriological sampling by this Authority:—

<i>Undertaking</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
Toot Rock, Pett Level	5	0
Fairlight Cove Water Company ..	9	2
Firehills Estate	5	0

DISTRIBUTION OF PIPED WATER IN THE PARISHES

(Figures for 1951 are indicated in parenthesis)

Parish	Properties directly connected to main	Premises supplied by meter
Ashburnham	38 (nil)	— (nil)
Battle	1,280 (1,224)	145 (142)
Bodiam	127 (127)	— (nil)
Burwash	540 (534)	— (nil)
Catsfield	166 (164)	— (nil)
Crowhurst	175 (169)	37 (41)
Etchingham	213 (213)	— (nil)
Guestling ^x	159 (100)	— (nil)
Hurst Green	249 (247)	— (nil)
Icklesham (Winchelsea)	220 (218)	17 (17)
Icklesham (Rye Harbour)	111 (111)	17 (17)
Icklesham (Parish)	66 (35)	— (nil)
Iden	2 (2)	1 (1)
Mountfield	7 (6)	— (nil)
Northiam	369 (361)	17 (16)
Ore	64 (64)	— (nil)
Peasmarsh	— (nil)	1 (nil)
Playden	51 (44)	6 (7)
Rye Foreign	19 (19)	3 (3)
Salehurst	469 (452)	— (nil)
Ticehurst	731 (719)	— (nil)
Westfield	219 (205)	— (nil)
Whatlington	4 (4)	— (nil)
Total	5,279 (5,018)	244 (244)

^x Including the parishes of Pett, Fairlight and that part of Guestling known as Three Oaks.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PROPERTIES CONNECTED TO THE MAIN SUPPLY

	<i>Houses directly connected to the main</i>	<i>Premises supplied by meter</i>
1949	4,574	228
1950	4,810	233
1951	5,038	244
1952	5,279	244

The percentage of rateable hereditaments connected to main water supply in Battle Rural District is now 48.09%.

SCHOOL WATER SUPPLIES

School	Result		Action taken and present position
	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Brede	0	1	Underground rainwater tank condemned and replaced by 400 gallon tank above ground. Water delivered by this Council.
Dallington ..	0	1	Well source variable in purity. Headmistress warned to boil all water for drinking and domestic purposes. School Medical Officer advised.
Ewhurst ..	—	—	Adjacent satisfactory source utilised.
Fairlight ..	2	0	Metafilter fitted. Satisfactory.
Peasmarsh ..	1	0	Metafilter fitted. Satisfactory.
Beckley ..	—	—	Water delivered by this Council.
Mountfield and Whatlington	—	—	Water delivered by this Council.
Playden ..	—	—	Water delivered by this Council.
Sedlescombe ..	—	—	Water delivered by this Council.
Staplecross ..	—	—	Water delivered by this Council.
Udimore ..	—	—	Piped supply to Housing Site now used.

The nineteen remaining schools in the District are served by main water supplies.

It will be noted that further improvements have been effected in the school water supplies.

Nineteen are now supplied by main water as against 15 in 1951.

I am not satisfied with the present water supply at Dallington School and it will be kept under supervision.

PARISH SPRINGS

Parish	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Brede	0	3
Bowlers Town, Rye Foreign	1	1
Sedlescombe	1	0
Anderson Spring, Staplecross (Ewhurst) ..	1	2
Whatlington	1	0
Winchelsea	0	1

The unsatisfactory parish springs and wells in Brede, Ewhurst and Rye Foreign indicate the urgency and necessity of the provision of main water in these parishes. Polluted water supplies constitute an ever-present menace to health.

WATER SAMPLES

The following water samples were taken from new or suspected sources during the year ended 31st December, 1952:

PARISH	WELLS		SPRINGS	
	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory
Ashburnham ..	—	—	—	—
Battle	1	—	—	—
Beckley	2	3	1	1
Brede	3	3	—	—
Brightling	—	—	1	1
Burwash	—	—	1	1
Catsfield	1	—	—	—
Crowhurst	—	3	—	—
Dallington	2	1	1	—
Etchingham	—	2	—	—
Ewhurst	3	4	2	—
Guestling	22	8	1	—
Icklesham	1	1	—	—
Iden	1	8	—	—
Mountfield	2	—	1	—
Northiam	—	1	1	—
Ore	—	1	—	—
Peasmarsh	1	2	—	—
Pett	—	1	—	—
Playden	2	1	—	—
Salehurst	—	2	1	—
Ticehurst	1	—	—	—
Westfield	6	3	—	1
Whatlington	3	3	—	—
	51	47	10	4

PARISH	RAIN WATER TANKS		STREAM	
	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory	Satisfactory	Unsat'factory
Battle	1	—	—	—
Beckley	—	3	—	—
Brede	—	—	1	—
Crowhurst	—	1	—	—
Ewhurst	—	1	—	—
Salehurst	1	—	—	—
	2	5	1	—

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF WATER SAMPLES SHOWING SATISFACTORY AND UNSATISFACTORY RESULTS

YEAR	SATISFACTORY		UNSATISFACTORY	
	Wells and rain water tanks	Springs and streams	Wells and rain water tanks	Springs and streams
1949 ..	19	7	45	11
1950 ..	33	14	55	24
1951 ..	18	12	30	60
1952 ..	53	11	52	4

Wells and Springs

Water sampling and advice to householders, farmers, etc., on methods of improving individual supplies by protecting wells and springs has occupied a large proportion of the Sanitary Inspectors' time and reflects the great need for piped water throughout the District.

Plumbo Solvency

The main water supplies are not liable to Plumbo Solvent action. Chemical samples taken from other sources have not revealed Plumbo Solvency.

Water Surveys

BECKLEY AND HORNS CROSS, NORTHIAM

One hundred and nineteen properties in Main Street, Beckley, and Horns Cross, Northiam, were visited, and of 106 householders interviewed 69 were willing to connect to a new main. 17 would like to connect but were worried about the cost, 18 definitely would not connect and two gave no definite answer. At 13 properties no answer could be obtained.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

New Sewerage Schemes

(a) ICKLESHAM

The sewerage scheme for the village of Icklesham was completed during the year and the disposal works were formally opened by the Chairman of the Public Health Committee, the Hon. E. D. Courthope, on 5th June.

134 properties were connected to the main sewer by the end of 1952.

(b) GUESTLING GREEN

Works to provide a new sewer and disposal works commenced in October, 1952.

This new sewer was designed primarily to serve new houses. However, many existing properties in the area will be able to take advantage of this new amenity.

(c) BURWASH

This urgently-needed sewerage scheme has remained in abeyance, awaiting Treasury sanction, although approved in principle by the Minister in November, 1951.

(d) TICEHURST

A public enquiry in connection with this scheme was held on 15th June, 1951. The original scheme was intended to serve the Flimwell area west of London Road in addition to Ticehurst Village but the full scheme was unfortunately cut and the Council has received permission to build the present treatment works and an outfall sewer together with a small length of new sewer in the Wardsbrook Lane area which will enable Ticehurst School to rid itself of the present exceedingly obnoxious method of disposal.

The new sewer will allow the Chequers Housing Site to be developed.

It is hoped that the scheme will ultimately be extended in order to serve Flimwell Village, where many nuisances exist.

A Resumé of Conditions at Camber Sands Stressing the Urgent Need for a Comprehensive Sewerage Scheme.

The resident population is 352 (County Planning Officer's Survey, 1952) reaching 1,600 in the summer months. This is in addition to the daily floating population which may reach 4,000 on a fine day.

The present method of sewage disposal is by:

- (a) cesspool drainage from residential properties;
- (b) bucket closets, the contents of which are subsequently buried in adjoining land, from caravan and tent dwellers who stay for periods up to 42 days (this time limit is often exceeded, leading to many prosecutions).

The great influx of visitors in the summer months places a tremendous load on the existing inadequate cesspools which regularly overflow before the owners take action.

The public conveniences have to be closed periodically, particularly when the sudden public demands in fine weather are greatest and most urgent, in order to avoid the creation of foul nuisances by the overflowing cesspools.

The cesspool emptying service, which is quite adequate in the winter months, faces an impossible task during the holiday period and is unable to satisfy the increased urgent calls from all quarters.

A combination of low-lying land and high water table creates a very unpleasant situation in the winter months when the accumulation of surface water frequently leads to flooding and some disruption of the buried faeces with consequent fouling of adjacent areas.

It is understood that main piped water will be available by late 1955 or early 1956 when an intolerable situation will arise if no sewage disposal system is made available to deal with the inevitably increased volume of sewage.

In my opinion, it is vitally urgent and necessary in order to conserve the health of the residents and visitors to this popular seaside resort that an adequate sewerage system be installed as soon as possible and certainly no later than the advent of a piped water supply.

REFUSE COLLECTION

The very large area to be covered (117,147 acres) makes refuse collection difficult and relatively costly. This Council has three 10 cu. yd. and two 7 cu. yd. vehicles and employs 11 men on collection. Two additional men are employed to control the Battle and Winchelsea refuse tips.

A weekly collection is made in the centre of Battle, a fortnightly collection on the immediate outskirts of Battle and at Robertsbridge, elsewhere the interval is from three to four weeks.

I am not satisfied with this attenuated service which is not satisfactory at its best and very unsatisfactory when impeded through sickness, holidays or breakdowns.

Many justified complaints of poor service have been received.

At the time of writing this report (Spring, 1953) the Council had agreed to provide an extra vehicle and to give a weekly collection at Camber, where, as stated in my previous report, the situation created by the large number of holiday visitors is potentially dangerous. It remains to be seen whether this one extra vehicle will be an adequate supplement for the needs of the District.

The Council's refuse tips at Battle, Winchelsea, Beckley, Guestling and Etchingham are generally well under control, inspected and treated by the Council's rat catchers and spread with insecticide when necessary. Control of the tip at Battle is hampered by unauthorised tipping owing to the fact that a public footpath skirts the site.

Liquid soap dispensers were fitted to each vehicle, a water container and paper towels were provided in order to allow dustmen to wash their hands before taking food, thus safeguarding their health. They were all given a talk on personal hygiene and a demonstration of the best method of usage. They were keen to take advantage of this essential amenity. All sewage disposal works were similarly equipped.

Unfortunately, the vibration of the vehicles caused breakages of the glass soap containers, and on communicating with the suppliers we were informed that they were in process of perfecting a plastic type.

Salvage

The results of the year's collection are summarised below:

<i>Material</i>	<i>Tons cwt. qrs. lb.</i>				<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Waste paper	75	1	0	0	610	11	7
Ferrous metals	22	7	0	0	76	1	6
Non-ferrous metals	2	8	0	0	205	17	1
Bottles and jars	2	2	3	0	9	7	0
Rags	4	8	0	0	88	0	0
Flock and Horsehair	—	3	1	12	2	0	3
	106	10	0	12	£991	17	5

CESSPOOL EMPTYING

The present arrangement whereby this service is performed by a private firm holding a "B" Transport Licence is not a satisfactory solution.

Calls are usually urgent when made and the delay in satisfying the demand is frequently much too long, and suitable disposal of cesspool contents cannot be sufficiently well supervised. There is thus a danger to health, particularly in the crowded coastal areas during the summer months.

Prompt emptying and suitable disposal of cesspool contents can only be assured if performed under the direct aegis of the Council.

INDUSTRIES

The numbers engaged in the main varied industries located in this District are given in the table on page 27.

Hop-pickers' Camps

The year 1952 was one of further improvement in the hop-pickers' camps, and fine weather contributed to the general contentment.

The season commenced on 25th August and was completed towards the end of September. The Bodiam area alone received some 3,500 men, women and children during this period. All were accommodated in huts with necessary amenities adjacent and suitably located.

Not a single complaint was received from pickers regarding their accommodation, and those interviewed during the course of inspections expressed satisfaction.

The rebuilt camp at Crainham (Messrs. Guinness) proved the advantages of a perimeter layout with a large clear open space in the centre. The tidiness and general appearance of neatness was in marked contrast to conditions on this site during the previous year.

Two small groups of new brick and concrete huts came into use for the first time at Park Farm, Bodiam (Levett), and at Holbeam Wood, Ticehurst, and minor improvements were carried out at other camps.

The general standard of cleanliness prior to entry was very good.

An increasing number of farmers prefer local labour for picking and usually arrange conveyance by coach or lorry to nearby centres of population where a reasonable pool of casual labour exists.

This is an extremely satisfactory solution and enables the housewives to get a complete change and incidentally, swell the family funds.

Experimentation with hop-picking machines still continues but has not reached that stage of efficiency as yet where it will oust the hand-picker.

Air Vice-Marshal F. J. Murphy, C.B., C.B.E., M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H., representing the Ministry of Health inspected the sites, hutments, etc., during hop-picking, and subsequently a letter was received from the Minister expressing satisfaction with the general arrangements.

Two related cases of meningococcal infection occurred amongst hop-pickers and they were removed to Hastings Isolation Hospital, where they made rapid and complete recoveries; the Medical Officer of Health of the District concerned was notified of this occurrence as it was likely that they were incubating this infection on arrival.

There were no other notifications of infectious disease and it was considered that the general health of the pickers was good during their stay.

NUMBERS ENGAGED IN THE MAIN INDUSTRIES

at 31st December, 1952

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Bakery	20	21	41
Beach works	47	—	47
Building trade	454	8	462
Concrete works	180	14	194
Egg packing station	13	14	27
Engineering works	211	21	232
Fencing companies	23	3	26
Flour mills	36	13	49
Gypsum mines	644	14	658
Hop gardens (permanent staff—Guinness's) ..	118	5	123
Jam factory	19	47	66
Laundries	15	57	72
Oil refining	4	—	4
Printing works	6	1	7
Sawmills	74	1	75
Sports ground contractors	14	1	15
Tannery	16	—	16
Tar distilleries	3	—	3
Wooden toy manufacturers	46	32	78

A special inspection of the egg packing station revealed certain structural defects with lack of amenities which were not considered to be in the best interest of public health.

The management was informed and proved most co-operative in eliminating possible hazards to health.

The need for personal hygiene was stressed, " Wash your hands " notices were placed in suitable positions, and the following rules laid down:

- (i) Personnel engaged in breaking eggs to be instructed in the need for scrupulous personal cleanliness.
- (ii) No person who is suffering or recovering from a cold, intestinal upset, boils on exposed places or " running " ears, to be engaged in this work.
- (iii) Hands to be inspected for cuts, abrasions, cleanliness of nails, etc., prior to commencing the operation.
- (iv) The frequent provision of clean overalls.

Working conditions in the other industries were generally good and employers have co-operated where necessary.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Twenty-three inspections under the Factories Act, 1937, were made during the year. No new Notices were served.

There are no Outworkers under Section 110 (1) (c) in this District.

NOTICES SERVED UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS

Number of Notices outstanding at the end of 1951	..	..	134
Number of Informal Notices served during 1952	..	..	244
Number of Informal Notices complied with during 1952	..	..	191
Number of Informal Notices outstanding at end of 1952	..	..	187
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1951	..	..	12
Number of Statutory Notices served during 1952	..	..	9
Number of Statutory Notices complied with during 1952	..	..	6
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1952	..	..	15

ACTION UNDER THE HOUSING ACT, 1936

Dwelling-houses represented under Section 11	..	..	..	10
Demolition Orders made	..	..	..	9
Undertakings to repair	..	..	..	0
Undertakings not to relet	..	..	..	1
Houses demolished in compliance with orders	..	..	..	2
Houses made fit after representation	..	..	..	2

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, AND HOUSING ACT, 1936

General Observations on the Year's Work

Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, was used in all cases where demolition had to be considered, whereas notices to secure repairs were served exclusively under the Public Health Act, 1936.

Seventeen properties were dealt with in the various stages of the procedure under Section 11 of the Housing Act, and 10 of these were represented during the year under review.

Full particulars of the represented properties are given in the following table :-

DETAILS OF ACTION UNDER SECTION 11 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1936

During the year 10 properties were represented under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Property	Action taken	Position at end of 1952
3 Pond Cottages, Peasmarsh.	Represented August, 1952 Undertaking not to re-let.	Still occupied.
Alderswood, Burwash	Represented October, 1952; Undertaking not to re-let.	Still occupied.
3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 Malt-houses, Peasmarsh.	Represented October, 1952; Demolition Orders December, 1952.	Still occupied.
Old School House, Winchelsea.	Represented December, 1952	Still occupied.
The Lodge, Valcbrook, Ore.	Demolition Order January, 1951.	Demolished.
Box Cottage, Brede	Undertaking to repair 1951	Repaired and re-occupied.
2 and 3 Prospect Cottages, Battle.	Destructive Undertaking 1951.	Converted into one dwelling.
46 High Street, Robertsbridge.	Closing Order 1951	Two families still awaiting rehousing.
1 and 2 Spilsteads Cottages, Sedlescombe.	Demolition Orders 1952	One still occupied.
1 and 2 Cherry Tree Cottages, Sedlescombe.	Demolition Orders 1950.	Still occupied.
Chestnut Cottage, Northiam.	Demolition Order May, 1952	Still occupied.
3 Marlow Cottages, Northiam.	Demolition Order January, 1952.	Demolished.

HOUSING ACT, 1949—IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

No applications for grants were made during the year under review.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS—COASTAL AREAS

The usual seasonable influx of caravans to the coastal areas kept one Sanitary Inspector fully employed.

The improved sea-wall and new road between Winchelsea and Pett attracted a greater number of caravans to this area.

The absence of water supply and drainage facilities has perforce precluded the issuing of any licences. Rigorous enforcement of the Public Health Act has been necessary in order to conserve the health of the people who have been attracted to this otherwise delightful coast.

Caravans were recorded on entry and kept under observation throughout their stay.

My remarks on the proposed sewerage scheme for Camber Sands may, with advantage, be read in conjunction with this subject.

HOUSE REQUISITIONING

Fifteen houses were derequisitioned and by 31st December only five properties were still under requisition.

The occupants were all rehoused in Council houses.

BUILDING LICENSING

The Sanitary Inspectors continued to do all the inspections involved in administering the regulations controlling civil building.

NEW DWELLINGS

New dwellings erected during 1952:—

(a) By the Council—

Battle	..	..	..	18 (+ shop and garage)
Crowhurst	..	..	..	2
Icklesham	..	..	..	31
Netherfield	..	..	..	14
Northiam	..	..	..	2
Playden	..	..	..	8
Salehurst	..	..	..	10
Stonegate ..	..	..	..	12
				—
				97
				—

(b) By private enterprise under licence .. 33

(c) By private enterprise (war destroyed) .. 4

Conversions to dwelling houses 13 new units

Houses in course of erection, 31st December, 1952 :

(a) By the Council :

Houses 89 + 1 shop and garage

(b) By private enterprise 17

COUNCIL HOUSES

Statistics and General Observations

Council houses have been provided wherever need is most acute, the only limiting factors being water, adequate sewerage schemes and ministerial sanctions.

The comparable figures of council houses in this District for 1939 and the years 1945 to 1952 are given below:—

1939	..	..	..	..	433
1945	..	..	..	..	433
1946	..	..	..	..	437
1947	..	..	..	..	540
1948	..	..	..	..	698
1949	..	..	..	..	746
1950	..	..	..	..	831
1951	..	..	..	..	895
1952	..	..	..	..	993

One hundred and fifty-five families were rehoused from the waiting list during the year, leaving 537 applicants.

Number of houses on main water 819

Number of houses on other supplies .. 174

Number of houses not having water closets .. 77

Improvements

In the past year 10 dwellings have been connected to main water and eight dwellings have been provided with water closets. Wherever possible every effort is being made to connect to main water supply and convert earth latrines to water closets.

WATER SUPPLIES TO COUNCIL HOUSES NOT ON MAIN SUPPLY

Estate	Result		Action taken
	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	
Brede (Wells) ..	3	5	The two main wells were brought up to Byelaw standard during 1952.
Beckley (Wells) ..	2	1	Notice "to boil" posted on defective well.
Dallington (Well) ..	1	—	—
Ewhurst (Rain water storage tank)	—	1	Water now delivered by this Council.
Mountfield (Well) ..	1	—	—
Pett (Well)	1	—	—
Sedlescombe (Well) ..	—	1	Considered to be soil contamination, now rectified.
Udimore (Spring) ..	1	—	—

Arrears of Rent

<i>Year ending</i>	<i>Total rent collectible</i>		<i>Percentage of arrears</i>
	£	s. d.	
31st March, 1951	43,238	8 1	.29
31st March, 1952	52,393	12 10	.105
31st March, 1953	58,755	2 5	.004

A pointer to the stability and integrity of the Council House tenants is indicated in the Percentage of Arrears for the years given above.

PROBLEM FAMILIES COMMITTEE

This Committee has continued to function but the time has now come when it might profitably enlarge its scope.

Quite often one is confronted with the urgent rehousing of a family with young children who, because of ignorance and lack of opportunity, display very poor standards of hygiene, and are consequently unsuitable for immediate rehousing in a new Council house without some preparation. It is likely that this attitude towards cleanliness in general is conditioned by the hitherto complete absence of modern amenities and an induced apathy as a result of their failure to overcome prevailing conditions. In effect, they have never had the opportunity to become house-proud and so their inexperience would merely perpetuate old habits in new surroundings. Their more self-respecting neighbours would shun them and they could quite easily become outcasts. As a defence against public opinion they assume a "don't care" attitude which is communicated to the children and so the seeds of delinquency are sown.

The present alternative is to leave them in their unpleasant, insanitary environment, with the likelihood of disease and low moral standards, a situation which is intolerable from the preventive aspect.

Owing to the operation of the Rent Restrictions Acts many owners find it uneconomic to maintain their properties in reasonable repair and are naturally disinclined to spend money unless they can foresee a reasonable return and, in fact, much money spent in this way represents sheer loss. Such properties inevitably become Section 11 under the Housing Act, 1936, which are defined as "not capable at reasonable expense of being rendered fit," i.e. having regard to the rent received.

I would suggest that a reasonable solution would be for the Council to acquire selected substandard cottages which can be renovated and given modern amenities.

The tenants would be satisfied to pay an increased rental which would ensure a reasonable return on the outlay by the Council and this would be far cheaper than the present council house, thus giving the occupants an opportunity to rehabilitate themselves and eventually be rehoused in new property when they have shown themselves capable of appreciating their new environment.

Properties of this type are usually fairly isolated and the tenants would therefore not have to endure the reproaches of their neighbours during the transitional stage. These families could be assisted in their re-orientation by the existing Problem Families Committee, whose name might with advantage be changed to the "Families Assistance Committee," thus shedding a designation which may imply some stigma on those families whom it may assist.

Obviously the properties acquired for this purpose would have to be carefully surveyed by the Surveyor to the Council, and their general suitability for the purpose envisaged could be a joint function of the Public Health and Housing Committee. Maybe they could form a sub-committee which would function as the proposed "Families Assistance Committee."

Apart from the communal good which may come from this scheme I feel that it would:

- (a) conserve certain otherwise desirable properties which would have to be demolished under present circumstances;
- (b) prove an eventual economy by the provision of suitable houses which would not increase the already heavy burden of existing subsidies;
- (c) make available reasonable dwellings at a cheap rental to deserving applicants.

There are some families who have overcome the inherent squalor of their present sub-standard houses by dint of continuous hard work and application, and who would wish to be suitably rehoused but are unable to do so because of financial stringency and they are too proud to avail themselves of the help which they could receive from the National Assistance Board towards meeting the extra rent for a new council house.

These people are particularly worthy of assistance and would prove to be first-class, contented tenants.

REHOUSING OF HOMELESS FAMILIES

An ever-recurring problem is presented by the young family not ordinarily domiciled in the District but unsuitably accommodated. Maybe as a sub-tenant in overcrowded conditions or in poorly furnished rooms, lacking the necessary amenities with all the attendant evils of such accommodation, and paying an exorbitant rent out of all proportion to the wage-earning capacity of the husband, thus additionally hazarding the nutrition of the family.

Representation to the Housing Committee for rehousing is made but they quite rightly consider that they should make their selection from families normally resident in the District and known to have been enduring poor housing conditions for some considerable time. It does not appear equitable that these newly arrived families should "jump the queue" because they find themselves in worse circumstances, in some measure due to their own volition. However, the problem of the "new" family

remains and their situation is urgent. An appeal to the County Welfare Officer brings forth the reply that it is the duty of the Housing Authority and so no help can be hoped for from this direction.

How long must these unfortunates remain "stateless" persons before they can be considered for rehousing on an equal footing with other residents who have established claims? When a family of this type is rehoused after a considerable lapse of time one quite often hears bitter complaints from District Councillors that persons with no previous connection with the parish concerned have been rehoused to the detriment of local applicants.

Consideration should be given to this matter in order to achieve a reasonable solution without subsequent recriminations.

A measure of hope could then be given to these families, otherwise it is intolerable that they should have to continue in this fashion, experiencing a complete lack of interest and possible rebuff from those in authority.

Situations of this type breed anxiety and insecurity and contribute to matrimonial upsets, with consequent ill effects on the mental stability of their offspring.

VISITS OF SANITARY INSPECTORS DURING 1952

Subject

Drains and Sanitary Accommodation	..	..	..	..	817
Water supply .. .. .	..	..	..	..	864
Milk and Dairies .. .. .	..	..	..	..	95
Building Inspections .. .. .	..	..	..	..	1,106
Hop-pickers' Dwellings .. .. .	..	..	..	..	65
Infectious Diseases .. .. .	..	..	..	..	137
Salvage and Public Cleansing .. .. .	..	..	..	..	12
Food shops .. .. .	..	..	..	..	190
Housing and Public Health Acts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	782
Requisitioning .. .. .	..	..	..	..	25
Moveable Dwellings .. .. .	..	..	..	..	354
Nuisances .. .. .	..	..	..	..	82
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal .. .. .	..	..	..	..	836
Factories and Workshops .. .. .	..	..	..	..	23
Schools .. .. .	..	..	..	..	51
Miscellaneous .. .. .	..	..	..	..	671
Rodent Control .. .. .	..	..	..	..	4
Verminous premises .. .. .	..	..	..	..	31
Petroleum Acts .. .. .	..	..	..	..	5

Total 6,150

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The Council employs two rat catchers, who treated 6 farms, 76 business premises and 515 private dwellings, the latter being treated free of charge.

They made 932 inspections of premises suspected of being infested, including 157 farms.

A routine survey of farms was carried out in two parishes and will proceed from parish to parish as circumstances permit. Unfortunately, foot and mouth disease prevented the operators from continuing inspections through much of the best weather.

There is strong evidence that both rat catchers have carried out consistently effective treatments, very few complaints having been received afterwards.

Fewer applications for treatment have been received from traders; this is due to the final clearance of a number of recurring infestations and an increasing reluctance or inability to pay for this service.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				Total
	Local Authority	Dwell- ing Houses	Agri- cultural	All other (including business and industrial)	
I. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District.	16	9,000 (est.)	1,354	1,099 (approx.)	11,469
II. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority during 1952 as a result (a) of notification, or (b) otherwise.	(a) — (b) 16	318 614	6 151	39 121	377 961
III. Number of properties (under II) found to be infested by rats	Major 4 Minor 1	29 455	6 0	17 48	56 504
IV. Number of Properties (under II) found to be seriously infested by mice.	—	31	0	11	42
V. Number of infested properties (under III and IV) treated by the Local Authority.	5	515	6	76	602

A new and improved rat poison has been used during the past year, with excellent results, enabling possible reinfestations to be kept under more efficient control. The danger to humans and domestic animals is negligible and bait can be left in situ with advantage as the rats do not associate the resultant ill effects with the bait.

The disadvantages are on the grounds of cost and a more lengthy period of baiting. This is, however, outweighed by the greatly increased effectiveness and safety of application.

HOME PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICE

This service continues to fulfil a very necessary function in this widespread rural district bringing treatment into the homes of patients who would otherwise have to spend many weary and painful hours in travelling and waiting for buses in all sorts of weather, with probable aggravation of existing symptoms.

During the period 1st April, 1952, to 31st March, 1953, 2,552 visits were made in the Battle Rural District and Borough of Rye compared with 2,143 in the corresponding period of the previous year.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

(a) Section 47. Removal to Suitable Premises of Persons in Need of Care and Attention

Fortunately it was not found necessary to invoke these provisions during the year under review.

(b) Section 50. Burial or Cremation of the Dead.

Action was taken under this Section in three cases.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

		1950		1951		1952	
		Cases	Mileage	Cases	Mileage	Cases	Mileage
Illness	..	436	14,748	421	13,267	459	14,829
Accidents	..	92	2,387	97	2,289	131	3,092
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		528	17,135	518	15,556	590	17,921
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

It will be observed that accident calls have contributed in large measure to the increased mileage and that the "illness" mileage approximates that of 1950.

A second ambulance was made available for duty, primarily in order to cover the Gypsum Mines in case of accident, the cost of "putting on the road" was defrayed by the management (Gypsum Mines).

The cost of the Ambulance Service as a whole is the responsibility of the County Council and the St. John Ambulance Brigade supply the trained personnel. This is an excellent example of the fusion of paid and voluntary services working in unison to provide a first-class service.

PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

The facilities available at the Public Health Laboratory, Brighton, have been used extensively, and I am obliged to the Director (Doctor J. E. Jameson) for his help and co-operation.

PREVENTION OF VENEREAL DISEASES

The Ministry of Health asked for the co-operation of all Local Authorities in giving publicity to the ever present danger of Venereal Diseases. Posters supplied by the Ministry were accordingly displayed at suitable vantage points throughout the District. Details regarding Treatment Centres and times of attendance were overprinted.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

Satisfactory liaison was maintained with Inspector Boobyer but he, unfortunately, left the district during the year and it was some time before he was replaced.

METEOROLOGY

Rainfall Figures taken at Battle Water Works

Days on which rain fell	..	..	..	153
Day on which heaviest amount fell	..	..	..	30th September
Amount recorded	..	..	..	1.73 inches
Longest period of drought	..	..	..	19 days
Period of drought	..	..	..	12th-30th July inclusive
Total rainfall for year 1952	..	..	..	35.12 inches

Comparison with previous years is given in the following table:

<i>Year</i>					<i>Total rainfall</i>
1947	..	..	..	..	28.1 inches
1948	..	..	..	..	28.5 inches
1949	..	..	..	..	27.3 inches
1950	..	..	..	..	32.1 inches
1951	..	..	..	..	45.0 inches
1952	..	..	..	..	35.12 inches

Temperature

Maximum temperature for 1952	..	93° on 1st July
Lowest recorded temperature	..	15° on 27th January

(I am indebted to Mr. G. A. Bramley (Water Engineer) for this information.)

